A LETTER OF ADVICE TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE Church of England, To come to the DIVINE SERVICE Morning and Evening EVERY DAY.

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IMPRIMATUR.

April 5th. 1688.

There is nothing in this Book, contrary to Faith or good Manners.

RO. MIDGLEY.

A LETTER OF ADVICE TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THF CHURCH of ENGLAND.

To come to the Divine Service, Morning and Evening every Day.

My Chriſtian Brethren,

I direct my Diſcourſe particularly to thoſe that profeſs to be of the Church of *England.* 'tis to you that I now ſpeak as a Friend, as a Brother for ſo I am ſure we ought to be one to

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the other, with all lowlineſs and meekneſs, 'tis the Command of Chriſt (who is love it ſelf) that we love one an other, by it we are known to be the true Diſciples and followers of him, and there can be no greater ſign of our love than friendly to admoniſh one another, to this Holy Duty of publick prayers.

O do but conſider the beauty of unity, and let it move you to run into the open Arms of your Mother the Church of *England*, and to be knit in the Bands of Amity with your Brethren in the Publick Aſſemblies every day in the Week, and then you will know, *How good and how pleaſant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity*, Pſa. 133. I hope there needs but few words to incourage you, that are of ſo good a Church, which hath ſuch honeſt Doctrines, and hath no deſign upon any of her Children, but to make them happy, to which end ſhe invites them to come readily to her Prayers every day; for not performing this great Duty, how many miſcarry in their buſineſs and concerns for want of the Publick Bleſſings to go along with them? And many are ſick and weak amongſt us, and yet how many do ſtill neglect coming, and what a ſmall Congregation do we ſee in many Great Pariſhes on *Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*. Is

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not this a ſhame to Chriſtian Religion, and to us that are of the Church of *England*: Shall we find time for every thing elſe, and ſhall not we find time for this great concern of our Souls, for with what confidence, can we expect a Bleſſing from our Heavenly Father without asking it. And what an ungrateful thing is it to receive Bleſſings at Gods hands daily, and not daily to acknowledge, and give him thanks for them in the Publick Prayers every day, as well as private; for by the publick, we let the World ſee, we are not aſhamed of our Religion; upon which if we do not attend, Men have reaſon to think we are void of all ſenſe of him, and have no reſpect to him.

For God is much more honoured by our Publick Addreſſes to him, than he can be, by any thing we can do in private; not but we may, and ought to uſe private Prayers ſuitable to our neceſſities, but we muſt not neglect his Publick Worſhip, which the private ought not to hinder, but promote, becauſe in truth, it is defective without Publick, being only Worſhip, but not Honour, Glory, Sacrifice and Service. See more at large in a late Diſcourſe of the daily and publick Prayers, by the Reverend Dean of *Peterborough*.

On

On *Sundays* we have our Churches very full for the moſt part, which is a good ſight to behold, and that one would think ſhould be a means to make us come every day, for I am ſure we want Gods Bleſſing every day, as well as on the Lords Day. And I am ſure, that all Miniſters of our Church will incourage this Holy and good deſign for publick Prayers every day; in Preaching to perſwade us to it, and will be very ready and willing to read Prayers in their own Pariſh Churches themſelves, as well as their Curates, if thoſe of the Pariſh would but come, for by our Prayers in publick we do our duty and promote Gods Honour and Glory.

Do but ask any of thoſe that come daily to publick Prayers, and they will tell you, there is no greater pleaſure nor happineſs here on earth.

We that are of the Church (and ſhow our ſelves ſo Loyal in every thing elſe) let not this part of your Loyalty in coming to the Church daily be wanting, but let others ſee (that boaſt how much they exceed in their publick daily Devotions) that we are not ſhort of them in the daily performance of that Sacred Duty. And now how highly are they to be commended that have promoted the Prayers of the Church every

every Day in ſo many ſeveral Pariſhes in and about this City of *London*, (which may be ſeen in the Rules for our more Devout Behaviour in the time of Divine Service in the Church of *England*, *&c.* lately publiſhed) which already has had good influence on the Country, who in many Pariſhes do the ſame, which is ſo good an Example, that it will I hope incourage more to do the like, when we conſider it is our duty ſo to do, for this great duty of ours, might be performed with great eaſe, if you would but meet in your Pariſhes and conſult what Hours are moſt convenient for the greateſt part of them, for I am ſure there is no Pariſh but has a ſufficient number that are of the Church of *England* that will come, for I hope there are but few, but will find time at VI. VII. or VIII. in the Morning before buſineſs breaks in upon them, or at IX. X. or a XI. when buſineſs is over: And for the Afternoon, either at III. IV. V. VI. VII. VIII. or IX. a Clock, ſo that it muſt be certainly our own fault if we cannot find time at ſome of the ſaid Hours for this great concern of our Souls.

And now how many is there among us that complains for want of Trade, and for want of good ſucceſs, and the badneſs of the times, all this

this is in a great measure by reason we neglect the publick service of the *C*hurch, for if we did but perform this our duty every day, I will assure you a Blessing will attend all your lawfull concerns, and you would prosper in them all, for first *seek the Kingdom of Heaven* (saith *C*hrist) *and all these things shall be added unto you.* Therefore let them that have a Trade and business, set a part some time of the day for this publick Service, and *I* hope they will not be a loser by it at the Years End, for it is so good a thing, that we shall never have cause to repent us of doing it, but on the contrary when we come to be sick, we shall very much lament the neglect of it. Therefore it is the duty of all you that are *Pa*rents of *C*hildren, to take care that your *C*hildren as well as your selves, as often as they can, repair unto the publick Service of the *C*hurch, on the Week days, and that your *C*hildren may know how to behave themselves there, let them read *the Rules for our more Devout Behaviour in the time of Divine Service in the Church of* England. These Rules were published, to shew in what good Order the publick Service of the *C*hurch of *England* is; and the Excellencies and Usefulness of it, when its Rules are duly Observed,

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Some will be apt to say, why will you go to Church, there will be nothing but Prayers to day, that is in words at length, there will be nothing but praying and honouring of God, which is the choiceſt part of Gods Worſhip, and Nobleſt imployment in our Religion. The council of the Apoſtles *Acts* VI. v. 4. *We will give our ſelves to Prayer, and Miniſtry of the Word.* Here the primacy is aſſigned to prayer, and it is evidently preferr'd before preaching, being the end thereof and well it may, in regard of its Superlative worth and vertue, for it is a duty of the neareſt acceſs to God, for if there was a neceſſity of making ſuch prayers for our uſe, then there is a neceſſity of our uſing them when they are made. And perhaps that peace which we have poſſeſſed when Nations round about us have been embroil'd in Wars, may be owing in good meaſure to our Churches Prayers. Nor know *I* a more likely means we can uſe to fix peace amongſt our ſelves, and make it laſting: See Mr. *Warrens* Sermon on the publick Forms of prayers more at large.

And now let us be willing to take good advice of the Reverend Dean of *Peterborough*, who in his late excellent diſcourſe of the daily publick prayers of the Church, invites us all, and gives his

Reaſons at large to come daily to the prayers in the publick Aſſemblies; And alſo *Dr. Comber's* late Book of frequent and fervent prayer accoring to Scripture and Primitive uſage, as it is now practiſed by the Pious Members of the *Church* of *England*: To which Books I refer you; and in obſerving of them, you will make this Nation happy, and your ſelves will be (what you would appear) good *Chriſtians* indeed.

And I hope the good Advice which the moſt Reverend Biſhop of *Bath* and *Wells* hath lately given in his Letter to the *Clergy* of his *Dioceſs*, will have influence on all, or the greateſt part of the *Clergy* in *England*: That their greateſt Zeal be ſpent for the publick prayers in the conſtant and devout uſe of them every day, both Morning and Evening, the publick ſafety both of *Church* and State being highly concerned therein, and not to be diſcourag'd, if but few come to the ſolemn Aſſemblies, but go to the Houſe of prayer where God is well known for a ſure Refuge, go, tho you go alone, or with but one beſides your ſelf.

And not leſs have they been recommended to all the Members of the *Church* of *England* by a late Reverend Prelate thereof, who ſays

Dr. Lany *Biſhop of* Ely.

Our

Our Service is a continual daily Sacrifice, a morning and evening prayer, and tho the greateſt benefit of this belongs to thoſe that daily attend it, yet being it is the publick Sacrifice of the Church, all that are Members of that, have their part and intereſt in it, tho they be abſent, yet not in in equal meaſure. The preſent are intituled to the benefit of a Sacrifice offered by them, the abſent as a Sacrifice offered for them. For this is our *Euge Sacrificium*, that is perpetually burning upon the Altar, for the Service of God, and in behalf of every Member of the Church that doth not *ponere obiceni*, ſet a Bar upon himſelf by his willful neglect of it, or by his oppoſition to it.

So that I hope we may ſee our Churches full in the time of Divine Service every day, as well as when there is a Sermon. And my hearty deſire and prayer unto God is, and ſhall be, that they who formerly have not done it, may joyn with our Holy Church in her Heavenly prayers, and that they who have done it, may ſtill continue ſo to do. O! how raviſhing a ſight will it be to ſee this performed, it will ſeem a New World, and we ſhould live as if we were in Heaven already.

So that now *I* am very willing to believe that this Letter of advice will be taken into due conſideration

ſideration, ſo that it will *I* hope be obſerved; my Reaſon is becauſe *I* write to thoſe of the *Church* of *England*, that has been always ſo good, and conformable to the Laws of the Land, and the prayers being eſtabliſhed by Law, you will obey it in coming every day to it.

Nothing now remains but to ſend up my prayers to God, that he will affect by his Grace, all your hearts, that you may perform this your duty.

And *I* pray God that he will vouchſafe us all, that follow theſe good Rules of our *Church*, that we may come to ſuch a Glory as we cannot wiſh to have a Greater.

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